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Moody Center for the Arts Announces Summer 2024 Exhibition, Opening May 31

Resonant Earth: Contemporary Perspectives on Land and Body
features works from Kelly Akashi, Lisa Alvarado, Eddie Rodolfo
Aparicio, Andrea Chung, Sky Hopinka, and Anna Mayer
On view through August 17, 2024



Kelly Akashi, *Life Forms*, 2022. Collection of Barbara and Michael Gamson. Courtesy of the artist. Photo by Paul Salvesson.

March 14, 2024 [Houston, TX]-- The Moody Center for the Arts at Rice University announces the exhibition *Resonant Earth: Contemporary Perspectives on Land and Body* opening May 31 and on view through August 17, 2024. Bringing together new and recent work by six contemporary artists based in the United States, the exhibition explores vital connections between the human body and the land. This focused presentation emphasizes how art and artists can build awareness toward integrated ecosystems in the

face of intergenerational trauma, continued exploitation of the Earth's resources, and climate change.

Featured artists include Kelly Akashi, Lisa Alvarado, Eddie Rodolfo Aparicio, Andrea Chung, Sky Hopinka, and Anna Mayer. Spanning a variety of media, including sculpture, painting, ceramics, collage, photography, video, and sound, the presentation also features two site-specific interventions commissioned by the Moody. Lisa Alvarado will create a monumental wall mural and Anna Mayer will mount an installation with locally sourced clay consisting of more than fifty new objects.

The diverse practices presented in *Resonant Earth* demonstrate a critical engagement with histories of the land, primarily in the Western and Southern United States. Collectively, the exhibition addresses the local environment while considering the forced migration and displacement of people and plants across geographies.

Executive Director Alison Weaver notes, "This project foregrounds artworks that speak to our lived experience in the United States, highlighting how personal and social histories shape our natural surroundings and our individual bodies. This summer we look forward to welcoming visitors who bring their own experiences to the galleries."

[Access the *Resonant Earth: Contemporary Perspectives on Land and Body* Press Kit](#)



Sky Hopinka, *Mnemonics of Shape and Reason*, 2022. Still. Courtesy of the artist.

About the Exhibition

Resonant Earth: Contemporary Perspectives on Land and Body seeks to illuminate the intertwined social and material histories of specific ecologies, ranging from farms along the US-Mexico border, to former Japanese American internment camps in Arizona, to the extraction of land in and around Houston. With geographical references that privilege biological memory and somatically inherited knowledge over a dominant linear history, these artists highlight the intergenerational pain of displacement and the healing power of reconnection to our place on the planet. The artworks on view echo our fraught engagement with the environment, while implying webs of interdependence in which the natural and the cultural are inseparable. The six selected artists draw on Indigenous and diasporic forms of knowledge, culture, and materials to envision modes of transformation and regeneration in relation to ongoing struggles for environmental and social justice.

A selection of new and recent work by **Kelly Akashi** underscores the artist's interest in temporality and memory as contained in the land and the body. Her sculptural work incorporates a range of material processes and is installed spatially as a constellation of objects that reference her personal and family history as well as the passage of time, the ephemerality of the human body, and the impermanence of the natural world.

For example, in *Conjoined Tumbleweeds*, Akashi cast entangled plants growing at the site of a Japanese American incarceration camp in Poston, AZ. The bronze sculpture refers to her father's imprisonment there during World War II. A cast of the artist's own body, fragmented, appears as a blue crystal hand in *Inheritance*. Adorned with Akashi's grandmother's ring, the fingers wrap around a stone from Poston, invoking the biological memory of the body as well as geological time.

Through double-sided hanging paintings, and a major site-specific wall mural accompanied by a sound installation, artist and musician **Lisa Alvarado** explores social histories of the land, including the Chicana/o Movement and her own family's experience along the US-Mexico border. Her free-hanging abstract paintings allude to generations of migrant farmers in the region, while referencing textile traditions and muralism of the Americas.

Compositionally anchored at the corner of the gallery space and expanding outward along horizontal and vertical planes, Alvarado's site-specific mural suggests "being in-between," both spatially and conceptually. In the monumental painting that encompasses the viewer, Alvarado also considers meridians—both celestial, in relation to one's position on Earth and the sky, and those used in traditional non-Western medicine to trace the pathways within one's own body.

Cast from the trunks of non-native trees in Los Angeles, large-scale sculptural works from **Eddie Rodolfo Aparicio's** *Caucho* (Rubber) series reference intertwined histories of plants and people. The artist, whose family is from El Salvador, considers experiences of migration, solidarity, and civil war that resonate with some Central American communities in Los Angeles. Deeply invested in the social histories of materials, Aparicio's artistic media suggests layers of meaning and the inseparability of the natural and the cultural. For instance, his use of rubber, which is made from the bloodlike sap of trees, recalls its importance as an Indigenous Mesoamerican technology and subsequent exploitation by colonialist extraction and trade.

An immersive planetarium installation together with collages by **Andrea Chung** reflect the interconnected histories of materials, processes, and places of the island nations in the Caribbean Sea and Indian Ocean. In her research-based practice, Chung often subverts tools of European colonialism while considering the multiplicity of the relationships that enslaved people had with the Earth. Inspired by star charts, and seeking to invert colonial maps, *The Westerlies: Prevailing the Winds* is a dome structure shrouded in cyanotype canvas that invites the viewer to be surrounded by the night sky and ocean as both expanse and enclosure. In collages featuring late-nineteenth-century ethnographic photographs of African women, Chung adorns the images with intricate beadwork, gold ink, and reproductions of delicate flora atop traditional birthing cloth, exploring the relationship between the people depicted and the land.

Videos by filmmaker, photographer, and poet **Sky Hopinka** portray landscapes traversed by the artist, interweaving personal and collective memory. A member of the Ho-Chunk Nation of Wisconsin and the Pechanga Band of Luiseño Indians, Hopinka explores Indigenous homeland and language through rhythmic and poetic accounts. In the selected videos, the artist layers visual and audio recordings, music, and text, to consider intergenerational connections to a place as well as the ongoing effects of colonialism while prompting the viewer to consider one's own relationship to landscape and memory.

Twenty-five pairs of newly created wall-mounted ceramic vessels and sculptures will be part of a site-specific installation by Houston-based artist **Anna Mayer**, who engages with the land locally. Known for her social and sculptural practice, Mayer's process involves analog firing techniques while critically engaging pre- and post-petroculture. In her hand-built ceramics, the artist incorporates what she calls "gleaned clay" (available as a by-

product of other processes such as flooding, drought, or construction), sourced from the Houston area.

Described as “implements” by the artist, the shapes of the wall-mounted objects reference drill bits and hammers as well as body parts and geological sediment. The series will be installed over photographic wallpaper depicting damp cement, suggesting water seeping up from the ground into the gallery. Additionally, Mayer is making new large-scale ceramic vessels that will be positioned among existing furniture at the Moody, underscoring their corporeal presence and connection. This new body of work examines how tools function as an extension of the body, commonly used to excavate earth, while reflecting a polyvalent approach to the land.

Resonant Earth is curated by Molly Everett, Assistant Curator, Moody Center for the Arts. The exhibition is made possible by the City of Houston through Houston Arts Alliance, the Brad and Leslie Bucher Artist Endowment, the Tamara de Kuffner Fund, the Kilgore Endowment Fund, and the Sewall Endowment.



Eddie Rodolfo Aparicio, *Ruta de las flores*, 2022. Courtesy of the artist and Commonwealth and Council, Los Angeles

About the Artists

Kelly Akashi's (b. 1983, Los Angeles, CA) major solo exhibition, *Kelly Akashi: Formations*, originated at the San José Museum of Art (2022–23), and traveled to the Frye Art Museum in Seattle (2023), and the Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego (2023–24). Her work is currently the subject of a solo presentation at the Henry Art Gallery, University of Washington, Seattle, WA (2023–24) and has been included in several group exhibitions internationally. Akashi is based in Los Angeles, CA.

Lisa Alvarado (b. 1982, San Antonio, TX) has exhibited and performed widely, with recent solo exhibitions at the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, Hartford, CT (2023) and at REDCAT, Los Angeles, CA (2023). Originally from San Antonio, TX, Alvarado now lives and works in Chicago, IL.

Eddie Rodolfo Aparicio's (b. 1990, Los Angeles, CA) work is the subject of a solo exhibition at The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, CA, on view until June 16, 2024. His work is featured in the 2024 Whitney Biennial in New York, NY, and Prospect.6 in New Orleans, LA. The artist lives and works in Los Angeles.

Andrea Chung (b. 1978, Newark, NJ) has received solo presentations at the John Michael Kohler Arts Center, Sheboygan, WI (2023), the Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto (2022), and the Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego, CA (2017). Her work has been exhibited at the J. Paul Getty Center, Los Angeles, CA (2021), the Pérez Art Museum, Miami, FL (2019), and in Prospect.4, New Orleans, LA (2017). Chung grew up in Sugar Land, TX, and is now based in San Diego, CA.

Sky Hopinka's (b. 1984, Ferndale, WA) work has been the subject of several solo exhibitions, including at the Museu de Arte de São Paulo, Brazil (2023), LUMA Arles, France (2022), Speed Art Museum, Louisville, KY (2022), and the Center for Curatorial Studies, Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, NY (2020). He is a 2022 MacArthur Fellow. Hopinka recently joined the faculty at Harvard University as an Assistant Professor in the Department of Art, Film, and Visual Studies, and is currently based in Cambridge, MA.

Anna Mayer's (b. 1974, Macomb, IL) practice spans Los Angeles and Houston. Her recent solo presentation at the Houston Center for Contemporary Craft (2021) was preceded by exhibitions at Ballroom Marfa, Marfa, TX (2016–17), and the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles, CA (2012). She lives in Houston, TX, and is an Associate Professor of sculpture at the University of Houston.



Lisa Alvarado, *Spinning Echo*, 2023. Courtesy the artist and Bridget Donahue, New York.

Special Events

Friday, May 31, 6–8 p.m.

Opening Reception for *Resonant Earth: Contemporary Perspectives on Land and Body*

Celebrate the start of the exhibition with the artists.

Saturday, June 1, 4–6 p.m.

Dimensions Variable: National Information Society

Together with her band National Information Society, featured artist Lisa Alvarado will activate the gallery space with a special musical performance.

Fridays, June 7, 14, 21, and 28 at 12 p.m.

The Moody Wellness Series

Join us on Fridays in June for meditation and yoga in the galleries, offered through a collaboration with the Barbara and David Gibbs Recreation and Wellness Center.

Saturdays, June 8, 15, 22, 29, 2–4 p.m.

Moody ArtLab

Guests of all ages are invited to create a hands-on craft inspired by artwork featured in the summer exhibition at our self-guided activity station on Saturdays in June. Materials and instructions provided.

Saturday, July 20, 12–5 p.m.

Summer Jam Community Day

Celebrate summer at this all-day, family-friendly event featuring an indoor farmer's market, art activities, and local food vendors.

About the Moody Center for the Arts

Inaugurated in February 2017, the Moody Center for the Arts at Rice University is a state-of-the-art, non-collecting institution dedicated to transdisciplinary collaboration among the arts, sciences, and humanities. The 50,000-square-foot facility, designed by acclaimed Los Angeles-based architect Michael Maltzan, serves as an experimental platform for creating and presenting works in all disciplines, a flexible teaching space to encourage new modes of making, and a forum for creative partnerships with visiting national and international artists. The Moody is free and open to the public year-round.

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6100 Main Street, MS-480, Houston, TX 77005

(University Entrance 8, at University Boulevard and Stockton Street)

Hours & Admission

Exhibition spaces are open to the public and free of charge Tuesday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and closed on Sundays, Mondays, and holidays. Events and programs are open to the public. For schedule, tickets, and prices as applicable, visit moody.rice.edu.

Directions & Parking

The Moody Center for the Arts is located on the campus of Rice University and is best reached by using Campus Entrance 8 at the intersection of University Boulevard and Stockton Street. As you enter campus, the building is on the right, just past the Media Center. There is a dedicated parking lot adjacent to the building. Payment for the Moody Lot is by credit card only.

For campus maps, visit www.rice.edu/maps.

About Rice University

Located on a 300-acre forested campus in Houston, Rice University is consistently ranked among the nation's top 20 universities by U.S. News & World Report. Rice has highly respected schools of Architecture, Business, Continuing Studies, Engineering, Humanities, Music, Natural Sciences and Social Sciences and is home to the Baker Institute for Public Policy. With 3,879 undergraduates and 2,861 graduate students, Rice's undergraduate student-to-faculty ratio is 6-to-1. Its residential college system builds close-knit communities and lifelong friendships, just one reason why Rice is ranked No. 1 for quality of life and for lots of race/class interaction and No. 2 for happiest students by the Princeton Review. Rice is also rated as the best value among private universities by Kiplinger's Personal Finance.

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